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Message Text

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12
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-15 SCCT-01 SIL-01 /087 W
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R 280525Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SEVSTATE WASHDC 4912
INFO USUN NEW YORK 0698
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AS, PFOR, PINT, IS, XF
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF PLO DELEGATION TO AUSTRALIA

1. SUMMARY: FIVE MEMBERS OF PLO HAVE APPLIED FOR AUSTRALIAN VISAS FOR A FIVE-WEEK PRIVATE VISIT TO AUSTRALIA. NEWS OF THESE APPLICATIONS HAS PROVOKED INTENSE POLITICAL CONTROVERSY IN AUSTRALIA AND WILL CERTAINLY BE A MAJOR ISSUE AT THE ALP'S FEDERAL EXECUTIVE MEETING IN TERRIGAL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE DFA ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY THAT 5 MEMBERS OF THE PLO HAD APPLIED FOR VISAS TO VISIT AUSTRALIA FOR FIVE WEEKS. THE DFA SPOKESMAN SAID ALL FIVE WOULD UNDERGO STRICT SECURITY CHECKS BEFORE A VISA WOULD BE ISSUED. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS THE FIVE ARE:

ABED QADER DAKER, DEPUTY PLO'S BEIRUT OFFICE AND MEMBER OF 1974 UN DELEGATION.
ZUHDI TARAZI, A LAWYER DESIGNATED AT MEMBER OF PLO PERMANENT DELEGATION TO THE UN, PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO ARAFAT WHEN LATTER VISITED CUBA.
DR. ALFRED TOUBASI, DENTIST AND DEPUTY MAJOR OF RAMULLAH.
ABDUL HAMAD, TRADE UNION LEADER IN DAMASCUS. HIS ROLE IS
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SUPPOSEDLY TO MAKE CONTACTS WITH AUSTRALIAN TRADE UNIONS.

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DR. MUSTAFA MULHIM, MEMBER OF THE PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
IN JORDAN.

3. THE TRIP HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY RADICAL LEFTWING
VICTORIAN ALP FEDERAL EXECUTIVE LEADER BILL HARTLEY WHO
RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A MONTH'S TRIP TO IRAQ, SYRIA,
LEBANON, AND THE UNITED ARIB EMIRATES.

4. THE PLANNED VISIT PROVOKED A NUMBER OF PRESS STORIES
AND EDITORIALS. THE PRESS REPORTED THAT SECURITY CHECKS
HAD LED TO STRONG DOUBTS ABOUT ONE OF THE FIVE MEN WHO
PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE GIVEN A VISA. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED
THAT THE AUSTRALIAN UNION OF STUDENTS HAD HELPED TO SET UP
THE VISIT AND THAT THE GROUP WAS HELPING TO ORGANIZE THE
TOUR. JANUARY 28TH EDITORIALS IN THE CANBERRA TIMES AND THE
MELBOURNE AGE, WHILE DENOUNCING THE PLO'S USE OF TERRORISM,
CONCLUDE THAT VISAS SHOULD BE ISSUED TO THE FIVE FOR A
PRIVATE VISIT IF NONE OF THEM HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ACTS OF
TERRORISM. EDITORIALS IN THE AUSTRALIAN AND THE SYDNEY
DAILY TELEGRAPH OPPOSE ISSUING VISAS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE
VISIT WILL IMPORT SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEM INTO AUSTRALIA
AND THAT THE VISIT WOULD NOT DEEPEN AUSTRALIAN UNDERSTANDING
OF MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS BUT MERELY POLARIZE AUSTRALIAN
OPINION.

5. A NUMBER OF POLITICAL FIGURES HAVE DENOUNCED THE VISIT.
BOB HAWKE, PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY AND THE
ACTU, SAID HE WILL ASK THE PRIME MINISTER NOT TO ISSUE VISAS
TO THE PLO REPRESENTATIVES. ANDREW PEACOCK, THE OPPOSITION
SPOKESMAN ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SAID VISAS SHOULD NOT BE ISSUED
TO PLO MEMBERS UNTIL THE PLO ACCEPTS ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST
AND RENOUNCED TERRORISM. THE ALP PREMIER OF SOUTH AUST-
RALIA, MR. DON DUNSTAN, SAID QTE "NO DELEGATION OF THE
PLO WILL BE RECEIVED BY ME OR GIVEN ANY FACILITIES BY THE
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT." END QTE. THE ACTING PREMIER
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA ALSO SAID THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE
IF THE GROUP DID NOT VISIT THAT STATE.

6. COMMENT. THIS ROW WILL CERTAINLY PRECIPITATE A FIGHT
BETWEEN THE PRO AND ANTI ISRAELI FACTIONS WITHIN THE ALP
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AT THE ALP'S FORTHCOMING FEDERAL PARTY CONFERENCE.
END COMMENT.
GREEN

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